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THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIER.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE WRITTEN REQUEST OF

5,000 EX-UNION SOLDIERS,

AT

STEINWAY HALL, NEW YORK CITY,

Friday Evening, May 3d, 1878,

FOR THE

Benefit of the 47th N. Y. Veteran Volunteers,

(MILES O'REILLY'S REGIMENT,)

BY

HON. ALFRED M. WADDELL, M. C.,

OF NORTH CAROLINA.

WASHINGTON :

JOSEPH L. PEARSON, PRINTER,

Cor. 9th and D streets.

1878.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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"HON. A. M. WADDELL, &C., &C., &C.

"The undersigned ex-Union Soldiers, a vast majority of whom belong to the Grand Army of the Republic, respectfully request you to deliver your lecture, "The Confederate Soldier," for the benefit of the Veteran Corps of the 17th New York Veteran Volunteers, (Private Miles O'Reilly's regiment,) in New York City, at an early day. Many of us, knowing that you served with distinction in the army of the late Confederate States, have watched your course in Congress, as the representative of the 3d North Carolina district, during the past seven years, and are aware of the liberal spirit you have exhibited in voting at all times for pensions to Union soldiers; many of us know the pacific, conservative tone of your speeches on public measures likely to re-awaken sectional bitterness—arguments delivered in the interest of a common, united country; and all of us would be happy to meet you face to face. We promise that a generous, soldierly welcome awaits you; for we need scarcely say, that, no matter on which side of the line during the late strife a man served, having served and knowing what it means, he is readiest to listen to one who has shown himself by his public acts, as you have repeatedly done, to have been an honorable, generous foe."

EXTRACT FROM COL. WADDELL'S REPLY.

"I accept with unfeigned satisfaction, though with many misgivings as to my ability to discharge the duty imposed upon me worthily. If anything I may say shall tend to strengthen the bonds of union between the people of the North and South, and to renew the spirit which animated our forefathers, my highest hope will be realized."

THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIER.

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SOLDIERS OF THE UNION—MY FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN :

The man who could without misgivings occupy the position assigned me this evening would be indeed unenviable. I frankly confess that this is to me one of the most trying, as it is one of the most gratifying, occasions in my experience. In attempting to respond to the invitation with which you have so highly honored me, my aim will be to reflect in some degree the spirit which prompted it—the soldier-spirit of courage, magnanimity, and patriotism. I shall speak to you truthfully and (as far as human infirmity will admit) impartially of that portion of your countrymen who were your fearless enemies in war and are your sincere friends in peace. You asked me to select as my theme this evening “The Confederate Soldier,” and the deed was as manly and generous in you as it was acceptable to me and to all those who once bore that name. Be assured that it has for them, as it should have for others, a significance which could never attach to any ordinary invitation. It is welcomed as a good omen of better days to come, as the dawning of a new era which can no longer be postponed. It is accepted as the crowning evidence of a real, sincere determination on the part of those who fought for national unity to obliterate every vestige of sectional feeling, and henceforward to co-operate in a spirit of generous patriotism with their Southern fellow-citizens in the advancement of their common country to that position among the nations of the earth to which natural causes and free institutions alike assign her. Now and then, but less and less frequently, demagogues, for sinister purposes, make spasmodic efforts to rekindle the dying embers of our late conflagration, but

public sentiment condemns all such efforts, and they will soon cease altogether. Your invitation, and my presence here this evening in answer to it, furnish the strongest proof that the capital for that trade is exhausted. It has been carried on, on both sides, principally by men who, whatever else they may have shed, did not spill an alarming quantity of blood during the war, and are not recognized by their countrymen as heroes of the civil strife; but who illustrate the prophetic witticism of Gen. Scott, that after the fighting was all over, the great difficulty would be in reconciling the non-combatants. Let them continue to afford us amusement now, as they excited our contempt then. The Union will probably survive it if the political career of the wordy warriors does not.

In extending the invitation with which you have honored me you were so kind as to allude to my course in Congress with commendation, especially in regard to questions affecting the interests of the pensioners of the government. It is a source of gratification to me to know that not only myself but every other ex-Confederate member of Congress has always and invariably voted for any and every kind of pension to the gallant men who fought against us, and to their widows and children. If there has ever been an exception to this rule I am not aware of it, and this has been done from no spirit of obsequiousness but from a sense of duty. If the same could be said of all your Senators and Representatives, the disabled soldiers and sailors of the Union and their widows and orphans would be in better condition than they are. The people who lost are willing to pay their part of the tax for this purpose, and those who won ought to be, if they are not.

THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

and the male citizen of the Confederate States were nearly absolutely synonymous terms. In no other country, with such a population and territory, was there ever such an approximation to universal soldierhood as was exhibited there.

No other government was ever charged with "robbing the cradle and the grave" to recruit its melting armies. In the good old conservative state in which I live—and which was so averse to the conflict before it was begun—the number of soldiers exceeded the number of voters by six thousand, a fact which, I believe, is without a parallel.

From the first fight at Bethel to the last one at Bentonville she was in the front line all the time, and her list of killed exceeds that of any other state on either side, and this was a state that voted down secession by a decided majority. All this was, and with some of the Northern people, perhaps, is, still a mystery. The question has been asked a thousand times how it could have happened that a people who were so much attached to the Union and so overwhelmingly opposed to secession in March, 1861, should in May following have been enthusiastic in their determination to resist to the last extremity the power of the Federal Government? The answer to this question is very simple, and contains the whole philosophy of the Confederate struggle. It is this: while the people differed as to the abstract right of a state to withdraw from the Union—a large majority doubting if not denying such right—and while they loved the Union to which their fathers had contributed so much, they were almost unanimous in the conviction that if a state did secede the other states had no right to use armed force to hold her, and that the first duty of a citizen in such a case was to his own state. This had been the political education of men of all parties. Holding these convictions as to the people of other states, they of course applied them to their own, and as in addition to their convictions, their interests were all on one side, they did not hesitate, when the issue was made, to take their position. And hence the Confederate soldier.

There have been, and still are, very erroneous ideas as to the motives which influenced these men to take up arms. Among them was the notion that they were at heart opposed to the form of government under which

they lived and longed for a more aristocratic form. The best answer to this is to be found in the fact that they adopted the Constitution of the United States almost *verbatim*, only incorporating into it a clearer statement of the relative rights of the states and the general government, and fixing the term of the Executive at six years and declaring his ineligibility to a second term. A more common, but equally erroneous, idea was that they were inspired by a fanatical love of the institution of slavery, and were determined to risk everything, their lives and fortunes, to perpetuate it, and great stress was laid upon the utterance attributed to a distinguished Georgian, but which was a gross misrepresentation, that the new government was to be founded upon slavery as its corner-stone. Yet only a small portion of the people of the South owned slaves, and I assert here now, as a fact which no Southern man will deny, that not one man in one hundred living there at that time, and perhaps not one in a thousand, would have shed one drop of his blood simply to save that institution.

I honestly believe (and I base my judgment upon historical facts as well as personal observation) that but for the continuous agitation of that question for years previous to the war, gradual emancipation under the pressure of public opinion in the South alone would have been inevitable. A private soldier, who was a gentleman of education, assured me during the war that his association with his comrades satisfied him that, if the conflict terminated successfully for the Confederacy, the rank and file of the army would demand the abolition of slavery in some way, because they believed it would be an everlasting source of trouble, as it had been throughout the history of the country, and he fully sympathized with the sentiment. He may have been in error, but believed what he said.

Many of you will be loth to believe this, perhaps, because the aversion which you, in common (it must be confessed) with the civilized world, entertained toward the institution, would exclude from your minds the possibility of such

action on the part of the Southern people. I do not know that it would add anything to the force of this assertion on my part to state a fact in my own experience ; but, accepting me as a fair representative of the people there—as one whose ancestors were among the first settlers—let me say that when the war was pending, I gave serious offence to a friend who was a large slaveholder, by declaring that rather than see a dissolution of the Union and civil war, I would be willing to see the total abolition of slavery, not by an unconstitutional act of the general government, but by the Southern people themselves. Do not misunderstand me.

I was “a good old rebel,” and would despise myself if I ever denied or apologized for it before a Northern audience. I am only illustrating a sentiment which prevailed to a large extent in my state at that time, and endeavoring to prove to you that slavery was not what the people of the South fought for. I recollect very well that one eccentric old gentleman, who was very much depressed by the turn which events had taken, gravely informed me in the spring of 1861, in a discussion as to the causes of the war, that, in his opinion, if the truth should ever be known, a *woman* would be found at the bottom of the trouble, for, he said, every great struggle, from the siege of Troy to the present day, had originated from that cause. The old gentleman may have been wrong, but whether one of the sex set the ball in motion or not, it is very certain that they kept it rolling right lively after it started.

No, my friends, the Confederate soldier did not leave his fireside, and those who were dear as life to him, to go out and fight for four long, weary, terrible years, for any of these things.

He fought, strange as it may sound to some ears, for exactly what you fought for—love of country and constitutional liberty. You believed that patriotism and duty demanded that you should sacrifice the comforts of home and your private interests, and undergo all the hardships and

perils of bloody war, in order to preserve the Union of the States and the liberties of the people.

He enthusiastically advanced to meet you, fully convinced that he was defending his home against an invader, who was bent upon his subjugation and degradation. He was just as sincere and honest as you were, and at the bar of conscience, and before the Righteous Judge, at whose tribunal we must all appear, he will stand acquitted of any offence in this respect.

How he fought during those four years of horror you may be the judges. How he suffered, through what privations he passed, how naked and hungry he went—with lacerated feet, but lion heart—from battlefield to battlefield of that stricken land, none but God and his comrades will ever know.

You overthrew him, and returned, amid the acclamations of rejoicing millions, to happy and prosperous homes. He went back through a wilderness, to find a solitary chimney where his cabin stood, and to kiss his ragged children, who cried for bread. Your homeward march was along a path strewn with garlands, and gladdened with songs of triumph; his was trod silently through a land of tears. In that memorable spring-time impartial Nature greeted your coming with her wealth of blooming laurels on a thousand Northern hillsides, and welcomed his returning with the waving of her cypress and the sighing of her pines. You found awaiting you a grateful nation, overflowing with riches, and proudly conscious of its power. He returned, ragged and penniless, to a ruined country; but, mark you, he did not complain. He expected the consequence of failure, and when it came he looked it in the face, as he did every other danger or calamity during the war, and accepted it like a man.

I never heard the Confederate soldier *whine* over his fate. Profanity may sometimes have disturbed the atmosphere a little, but it was never made sickening by any such infusion as that. The grand words of Robt. E. Lee to the surren-

dered remnant of his splendid army, "Human virtue should be equal to human calamity," touched the heart of the Southern people, and as the blast of a Bessemer furnace transforms the softened metal, steeled it against adversity. They went to work with the same spirit which animated them during the war, exhibiting a recuperative power at which you were amazed, and their country, then utterly desolate, smiled again with bounteous harvests, and despite every obstacle, has steadily advanced towards prosperity and power. In this material development of that portion of your country, I know you have rejoiced, and many are the hard-fisted ex-Confederates who have been cheered and assisted by their former enemies in their struggle with adverse fortune since the war.

A recent instance of it is given in a North Carolina newspaper, as follows :

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY—A TIMELY CUP OF WATER.—During the war our townsman, Jas. R. Moore, on one occasion went out in front of our lines to give some water to a wounded Yankee, who was lying in a helpless condition upon the ground but lately occupied by the Federal forces, and from which they had recently been driven. The man was crying piteously for water, and the bullets were rattling around from both armies. Moore said he intended to risk the exposure to do a deed of mercy, and went out to him. It proved to be a captain of a Pennsylvania regiment, who was profuse with thanks, and offered Moore his gold watch, which the gallant Confederate declined. He begged for his name that he might, if he survived the war, remember him. This he wrote down in his memorandum book. The captain recently wrote here to know if Moore was living—said he was rich, but dying of consumption, and wanted to provide for Moore in his will. Mr. Moore wrote to him and received a friendly letter in reply, telling him there was \$10,000 set apart for his use, to be paid in instalments of \$2,000 each. The Federal officer has since died, and the other day the first payment of \$2,000 was received. Truly 'tis "good to give even a cup of cold water in the right spirit."—(*Morganton (N. C.) correspondence.*)

They were and are your countrymen, and the title to which each can lay claim with highest pride is, "I was an

American soldier." There is not a living soldier to-day among them who does not smile at the recollection of the names by which we designated each other. "We uns" used to call "you uns" "Yanks" and "Blue-bellies," and "you uns" used to call us "Rebs," and "Johnnies," and "Grey-backs." There was no malice, no bitterness, between the boys after they got acquainted with each other by the interchange of shot and shell, and this argument between them was common: "Why in thunder don't you let us alone and go back home?" "What did you fire on the flag for?" and "Why don't you come back and behave yourselves?" I never heard a Union soldier call a Confederate soldier a traitor. That epithet was reserved for the exclusive use of a different class of patriots, whose sole ammunition during the conflict was the vocabulary, and who never fired even that except at long range.

The time has come when we can talk over these things as matters of history. You know, as I do, that if the settlement of the questions resulting from the war had been left to the fighting men of both sides they would have been very speedily adjusted; but so-called *statesmanship*, which has been a chronic disease in our body politic, broke out like the measles all over the country and kept it in a state of constant irritation for some years.

It is a complaint which has been principally confined to gentlemen who, from 1861 to 1865, were absorbed in other pursuits than those which engaged your attention and mine. They are good men (for there is a remnant still left) and, perhaps, *as slow to anger*, considering the provocations during that period of four years, as any who ever lived. Let us humbly trust that they may soon be pacified. I have never been able to contemplate them with indifference. They always excite in me a disposition to pray, and very devoutly, for a visit from that evangel of civilization, Jesse Holmes. Perhaps the name of this benefactor may have escaped you. He should never be forgotten, for his mission in this world is most charitable. He is "the fool-

killer." Many times during the last seven years I have longed for his presence in the House of Representatives, but so many opportunities have passed when his services would have been invaluable to the Republic, that I am forced to believe that he has abandoned us to our fate. It may be that the amount of labor which would have been required appalled him, but his absence has been a cruel blow to the best interests of the country. I think it would be safe to say that, if he *had* visited the halls of legislation throughout the country generally, his victims would not have been found to any great extent among the soldier element. Their influence has almost invariably been exercised in the direction of candor, conservatism, and peace.

Who that witnessed them can ever forget the opening scenes of the war? They must remain forever stamped upon our memories—and only there, for artist's brush, nor author's pen, can ever reproduce them. Every possible phase of human character, every conceivable dramatic element, from the sublimest form of tragedy to the most ludicrous expression of the comic and farcical in human experience was daily witnessed. Tears and laughter went hand in hand, the twin genii of that hysteric period. I feel their influence even now in recalling the events of those early days, and am sure I could entertain you for hours by a recitation of such events within my own experience. You may have seen some approximation to them up here in the rural districts, but you can form no idea of what transpired in the Southern States. They were and are *sui generis*.

It was my fortune to witness the bombardment of Fort Sumter, in April, 1861. Having seen the telegram from General Beauregard to Jefferson Davis, as it passed through my town, in which he notified him that at 4 o'clock on the next morning (in case of a refusal by Major Anderson to surrender) he would open fire on the fort, I jumped upon the cars and started for Charleston. I shall never forget that, after a night of great anxiety, and when about twenty

miles from the city, just as the first grey streaks began to lighten the eastern sky, and when the silent swamps were awakened only by the rumble of the train, there was distinctly heard a single dull, heavy report like a clap of distant thunder, and, immediately following it, at intervals of a minute or two, that peculiar measured throb of artillery which was then so new, but afterwards became so familiar to our ears. The excitement on the train at once became intense, and the engineer, sympathizing with it, opened his valves and giving free rein to the iron horse, rushed us with tremendous speed into the historic city. Springing from the train, and dashing through the silent streets we entered our hotel, ascended to the roof, and there I experienced sensations which never before or since have been mine. As I stepped into the cupola and looked out upon that splendid harbor, there, in the centre of its gateway to the sea, half wrapped in the morning mist, lay Sumter, and, high above its parapets, fluttering in the morning breeze floated proudly and defiantly the stars and stripes. In a moment afterwards, just above it, there was a sudden red flash and a column of smoke, followed by an explosion, and opposite, on James Island, a corresponding puff floated away on the breeze, and I realized with emotions indescribable that I was looking upon a civil war among my countrymen. Deeply impressed with the scene, I descended to the street on my way to that fine sea-wall called "the Battery," in order to witness the progress of the bombardment, and was confronted by a person about 4½ feet high, with huge epaulettes and bullet buttons liberally distributed over a homespun uniform, who desired to know something of my personal history, and expressed a desperate determination to devour an unlimited number of abolitionists. I escaped this terrible cannibal, but am rejoiced to know that he served his country faithfully during the entire war as assistant cook to a wagon train, and immediately upon its termination joined the brotherhood of statesmen who panted for the blood of rebels.

It is a source of pride and comfort, however, to know that the class to which this individual belonged was insignificant in numbers as he was in stature, and that the great mass of the people throughout the South, after hostilities began, were animated by a single purpose, viz., to exhaust every resource at their command in the grand struggle which they felt to be impending, if it should be necessary to the attainment of success. That they would succeed was the universal conviction up to the 4th of July, 1863. Until that date I never saw a soldier who entertained the least doubt of it for a moment; but when the wires whispered simultaneously the disastrous news from Vicksburg and Gettysburg on that fatal day, a change was perceptible in the serious faces which met one at every turn, and it was evident that, for the first time since the war began, an uneasy suspicion as to the final result was beginning to force itself, both upon the army and the people. There was no diminution of courage, for frequently after that they fought magnificently, even more desperately, as you well know, than ever; but the buoyant spirit which a confident hope inspires, and which they had always previously displayed, began gradually to sink. They never ceased to be good-natured and jolly, as all armies are apt to be even to the last; but from that 4th day of July the barometer commenced to fall, and though subsequent victories would, for a moment, raise the mercury, the process steadily continued. And yet there probably never was an army which, while undergoing such hardships for years as they were subjected to, submitted so uncomplainingly to their trials, and even turned their own sufferings and misfortunes into ridicule as they did. Poor fellows, they did have a hard time—a much harder time than even you Union soldiers, who knew more about them than anybody else, ever dreamed of. Contemplating their antecedents, did it never occur to you that their powers of endurance, their “staying qualities,” afforded an interesting study? Was not the popular idea this: that, while they had undoubted courage and would

probably make brilliant dashes and fight impetuously for a time, they would be unable to stand exposure, long marches, the erection of defensive works, severe privations, and the drudgery of hard campaigns? Was it not expected that excelling in horsemanship and familiar with the use of small arms, their cavalry would be their most formidable arm? If so, how must the actual experience of the war have surprised you. They were regarded as an indolent, passionate people, whose enthusiasm would soon burn itself out in the presence of continuous hard work. Ah, my friends, those who entertained this conception of them forgot from what stock they came, and made no allowance for the combined influences of *caste* and republican institutions in the formation of national and individual character. The result of this combination—so rare in human history—was a society which, however regarded from a politico-economic or humanitarian point of view, was productive of a type of men eminently qualified to excel in war. The fact is that their capacity to endure was a matter of as much surprise to themselves almost, as to you and the rest of the world, and the realization of it enabled them to undergo all their subsequent trials. When I say this, it is not my intention to create the impression that the people—who were the army—were unaccustomed to labor, for a very large majority of them were laboring men in one sphere or another. But most of them were laborers from choice and not from necessity, and were, therefore, ignorant of their own powers of endurance. A very considerable proportion of them, it is true, had never done much, if any, manual labor, and it is a curious fact that this very element exhibited, perhaps, as much if not more of this capacity than any other in the army.

It is a fact, too, of which you may not be aware, although it has been stated publicly, that in many localities of the South the white men have produced more cotton and other products by their own labor than the colored men have, although the latter were largely in the majority.

All the declamation about a handful of ambitious aristocrats leading the four millions of Southern people blindly into rebellion is the merest stuff and drivel. It is an insult to the intelligence and character of those people, and an utter perversion of the truth. Brains, morale, and wealth had the same influence there that they exercise elsewhere, and no more. If the masses of the people had not fully sympathized with the movement attributed to the so-called leaders, it would have been a failure from the beginning. They understood thoroughly what they were about, they knew exactly what they were fighting for, and appreciated the disadvantages under which they labored and the odds against them as well as others did. They were not helpless dependents or untutored savages, but American freemen, who enjoyed the proud inheritance of constitutional liberty bequeathed them by their fathers; and the best evidence that they did not consider themselves as misguided and betrayed, may be found in the fact that instead of condemning they have never ceased to do honor to the men who were most prominent in their cause.

The marvel of our institutions and their chief glory is the principle of local self-government. To that fundamental idea, which is so deep-rooted among us, is attributable the amazing spectacle which was witnessed after the war, viz: a victorious army, after four years of civil conflict, marching triumphantly to their homes and quietly dispersing to their several avocations without the least attempt to interfere with the order of government, and a defeated one going back to gather up the wretched remnants of their ruined industries, and to begin anew the rebuilding of their wasted land peacefully, and in perfect subordination to the civil law. There was no attempt, on the one hand, to make the military power predominant in the country, and not one instance, on the other, of resistance to the established authority. Each returned to its accustomed obedience to local government, and the wheels revolved as smoothly as if there had never been a disturbance. It was

a grand illustration of the wisdom of our system, and a triumphant vindication of the superhuman sagacity of those who constructed it.

S. S. Prentiss once described this easy transition of the soldier into the citizen in this beautiful simile :

“ Thus the dark thunder-cloud at nature’s summons marshals its black battalion, and lowers along the horizon until at length, its mission spent, its dread artillery silenced, it melts away into the blue ether, and the next morning you may find it bespangling the verdant mead, or glittering in the dew-drops which the sad night hath wept.”

This spirit of obedience to the authority recognized as lawful, is not peculiar to any section of our country. Indeed it was what kept up both armies during the war ; and you were doubtless surprised to find among the Confederates such a complete absence of insubordination. A more faithful, obedient, and patient army never went to battle. Volumes could be filled with incidents in illustration of this, but I shall never forget one which came under my own observation. A member of my regiment came to me one day with an open letter in his hand, which he held out, while the tears slowly coursed down his cheeks ; and, in a voice broken by deep emotion, said, “ Colonel, for God’s sake read this, and then help me to get a furlough.” Taking the letter I found it to be about as follows :

“ MY DEAR HUSBAND : I have been sick for a week, and now both the children are sick. I am alone and helpless. I have not got any money to buy medicine. The meat is all out, and I cooked the last dust of meal in the house to-day. The neighbors are all very poor, as you know, and can’t help me. Oh ! what shall I do ? Please come home immediately, for I am afraid we will starve.”

The soldier looked eagerly at me while I read, and as the letter was finished repeated his petition for a furlough. The orders from headquarters positively forbade, at the time, any application for a furlough under any circumstances whatever. I so informed him, with tears which I could not restrain, but I never wanted to advise a man to *desert*

until that moment, and was determined, if he did, that he should never be punished for it. He turned away slowly, and, without any other utterance than one of sorrow, returned to his duty and faithfully performed it during the whole of that terrible campaign. Of course his was only one among many similar cases.

In view of such inducements to desert it is infinitely to their credit as true soldiers, faithful to the trust reposed in them, that so few yielded to the temptation. There is a story of one of these few which gives plausibility to that other traditional story of the man who still continues to vote for General Jackson. It is said that a year or two after the war was over a gaunt, loose-jointed fellow in a ragged grey suit was seen emerging from the ever-glades of Florida with a musket on his shoulder, who, in response to an inquiry as to where he was going, replied that he "reckoned he had laid out about long enough, and he was agwine back to Lee's army." He must have been a relative of Bill Arp's grandmother, who, about that time, said she "had hearn tell that Lee had whipped 'em agin," and thereupon expressed a firm conviction that "Confederate money would be good yit." The faith of women is wonderful.

There was one peculiarity about the Confederate army of which mention is seldom made, but which was very significant. It was almost entirely without sutlers. Still it managed to get along, and even to win battles! There was great anxiety among the boys, in the absence of any of their own, to get acquainted with some of yours, but it was very rare that they succeeded, for the gentlemen sought after were distant in their manners, and didn't seem to desire any new acquaintances.

We didn't have any for very good reasons. In the first place there were hardly sutlers' stores enough in the country to stock a hand-cart, and if there had been, the inducement to speculate was insufficient, for nobody hankered after Confederate money, which was the only currency; and then, when pay-day came, which occurred semi-occa-

sionally, if a man wanted to buy anything he found that it would bankrupt his entire company to do it. You remember how disgusted you used to be when you captured one of our commissary wagons. As to clothing, the man who was caught with a "biled" shirt on didn't fare as well as a "bloated bondholder" in a greenback campaign, or a door-keeper in the present Congress. Nevertheless a sutler is frequently a benefactor, and I should be grossly lacking in gratitude if I failed to express, on behalf of the Confederate soldier, the pleasurable emotions which the recollection of those you had always excited in his heart. They are among the sweetest memories of the war.

While it may be difficult to determine in what engagement of the war the severest concentrated fire of small arms occurred, there can be no doubt as to the place where the power of heavy artillery was exhibited in its most terrific form. The bombardment of Fort Fisher was by far the most frightful that has ever happened since the invention of gunpowder. All the testimony taken before the "Committee on the Conduct of the War" goes to establish this fact; but, in addition to this, and to the universal admission on the Confederate side, there was still stronger evidence which was given in my presence the day after the capture of the fort, by a competent and disinterested witness. The siege of Sebastopol is admitted to have been the greatest bombardment in history up to that time. An English officer, however, who had run the blockade, and was present at Fort Fisher under an assumed name, was giving an account of it after his escape, and, as preliminary to his remarks, said that he had been at Sebastopol, and thought there could never be anything like it again. "But," said he, "Sebastopol was the merest child's play compared to what I have witnessed in the last two days. It was simply inconceivable and indescribable in its awful grandeur. I had no conception until now of what an artillery fire could be." You remember, perhaps, that there was no cessation for more than forty-eight hours, and there were, besides the

other projectiles, as many as twenty-five 11-inch shells in the air at the same instant throughout the whole time. Fifty thousand shells were expended by the fleet. During the continuance of the fire it would have been impossible for any living thing to remain on the parapets which faced the sea for a mile, and when the assaulting column was formed there was, along that whole front, but a single gun remaining, and that could only be fired once before the fort was reached, and that long, desperate, hand-to-hand struggle began. A month before this the celebrated powder-ship explosion occurred, which was intended to blow down this solid earth-work, a mile in extent, with forty-feet traverses every few yards. The best incident of this huge joke was related to me by a distinguished officer of the navy several years ago. The night after the explosion of the powder-ship some of our pickets on the beach were captured and carried on board the admiral's ship. Among them was a very solemn-looking fellow, who sat silently and sadly chewing tobacco. As there was intense curiosity among the officers of the fleet to know the result of the remarkable experiment, one of them asked the solemn-looking "Reb" if he was in the fort when the powder-ship exploded; to which he replied in the affirmative—but without exhibiting the least interest in the matter; whereupon the officers gathered around him and began to ask questions:

"You say you were inside the fort?"

"Yes; I was thar."

"What was the effect of the explosion?"

"Mighty bad, sir—powerful bad."

"Well, what was it? Did it kill any rebels or throw down any of the works?"

"No, sir; hit didn't do that."

"Well, what did it do? Speak out, d——n your eyes."

"Why, stranger, hit waked up pretty nigh every man in the fort!"

It is amusing now to look back to 1861, and recall the organization and equipment of some of the Confederate

troops; and here let me say that they were not officered, as was commonly supposed, by the sons of rich men, the scions of what was called "the slave aristocracy." In my own state, with the exception of the first ten regiments—which were officered by appointment of the governor—the company and field officers were elected; the former by the rank and file, and the latter by the company officers, with very few exceptions, and this, I believe, was the general rule in the service. There were, consequently, thousands of the best-educated and wealthiest young men of the South in the ranks. There was one battalion of Georgians which I remember very well, and which was terribly cut to pieces in their first fight, which represented millions, and there was hardly a man in it over thirty years of age. I say it is amusing to recall the organization and equipment of some of them. The eagerness to get into the first engagement was universal, and it is an actual fact that one regiment which was organized, and hurried on to the first fight at Bull Run, was carried into battle by its brave colonel—who was killed—and charged a battery *by the flank* in column of fours. There happened to be an old soldier in it who usurped authority, and formed it in line before the guns were trained on the head of the column. One fellow was so anxious that when his comrades raised a shout, he indignantly exclaimed, "If you don't stop your fuss, you'll scare 'em off and we won't get a shot." He got several after that.

Tons of metal were used in the manufacture of huge bowie-knives at the beginning of the war, and sometimes a fellow would be seen with two at his belt, accompanied, perhaps, by a little three-inch pistol, which could not hurt anybody ten paces away. Double-barrel shot-guns were common.

The ideas in regard to transportation in the beginning were sufficient to run a quartermaster of the regular service wild. Not only officers, but many privates started out with trunks and servants. In the first cavalry regiments

that were formed, all the privates furnished their own horses, and this was the case to a large extent throughout the war. A large proportion of these regiments were reduced, and many entirely dismounted, by the starvation of their chargers. At times, long forage became so scarce that the poor creatures would gnaw the bark from the trees and even chew at each others tails in a desperate effort to relieve the cravings of their fevered stomachs, while their riders were indulging in the luxury of fried or raw bacon, stale corn-bread, and branch water. You may have considered your hardships very severe, and sometimes, for a brief period, they were, doubtless, so. You thought it was very bad to be deprived of hot coffee, good meat, crackers and cheese, or the like; but the Confederate, whether officer or private soldier, very rarely, even in camp, sniffed the aroma of that pleasant beverage or enjoyed other food than that which I have mentioned. The recollection of his experience in this respect, and of the cheerful alacrity with which under such circumstances he performed his arduous duties, must ever command the respectful admiration of all generous minds.

Of course, after the development of a settled purpose on the part of the Northern people to prosecute the war to a successful conclusion, as evidenced by a constant increase of their immense armies and an unlimited accumulation of all the armament and supplies on land and sea necessary to the accomplishment of their purpose, it became only a question of time how long the Confederates could hold out. They did hold out to the uttermost verge of absolute exhaustion.

You all remember—and history will preserve the story long after we shall have passed away—what a mere handful of that splendid army that confronted you for four years on a hundred battle-fields was left to surrender at Appomattox.

They were ready even then, as you also know, to continue the fight—hemmed in as they were by overwhelming numbers, and reduced, by the constant double duty to which they had long been subjected, to the pitiful condition of a

thin skirmish line. But humanity interposed, and the rifles which had rung responsive to your battle-cry so often, were laid down. Strong men wept, bade each other farewell, and turned their sad faces toward their Southern homes—not to be greeted joyfully, and to rest happily after their long trial and suffering, but to grapple with adversity in new forms, and to begin the slow and painful task of restoring a wasted land to prosperity again. The process is going on, and with each returning spring the hills and valleys of the beautiful South throb more lustily beneath their green mantle with the pulses of returning life, and the glad earth sings more triumphantly her resurrection anthem. Chastened and purified by the fires through which he has passed, the Confederate soldier will redeem the land he loved so well, and inspired by the wisdom born of hard experience, will so shape her destiny that you and all his countrymen will ere long gladly acknowledge that “her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

Citizen-soldiers of the Republic! will you not aid him in his honest efforts to accomplish his high purpose? Which is most worthy of your respect and confidence, the man who looked you squarely in the face and fought you until he was utterly exhausted in behalf of a cause which he sincerely believed to be just, or the hero who in those trying times flung no other banner to the breeze save his coat-tails, and to-day marches beneath the standard of the “bloody shirt?” If there is anything which the American people of all sections and every shade of political opinion respect and admire more than any other thing in human character, it is *pluck*. Imagine the condition of the Confederate soldier to-day as a candidate for office, if his only enterprise had been the accumulation of commissary stores for *you* during the war!

My friends, the vernal season is at hand, and the South, harmonizing Nature with political sentiment, anticipates you in putting forth the buds and blossoms of hope and confidence in the success of our free institutions. As the sun

in his glory reaches your more northern clime, and warms your colder, but equally generous, soil into exuberant life, so may the quickening rays of kindly and fraternal feeling fall upon your hearts and evoke a larger growth of liberal sentiment towards your Southern countrymen. Encourage it, and soon we will have a "glorious summer" of peace, concord, and national unity, for which are daily breathed the aspirations of all true patriots everywhere throughout our land.

Soldiers of the Union! I would not only be guilty of a churlish neglect of duty and courtesy, but would do violence to my own feelings, if I permitted this opportunity to pass without attempting to pay to the brave men who battled for the supremacy of the national authority, the tribute of respect and admiration which the Confederate soldier entertains toward them. He knows what motives influenced them. He fully appreciates the patriotic spirit which inspired them. He, better than all others, can sympathize with them in all the memories which the war recalls. He knows more fully than all others how splendidly they fought, how patiently they suffered, and how completely they triumphed. Conscious of his own prowess, he willingly acknowledges theirs, and will never consent to see them deprived of a single laurel or denied a full recognition of their services. He will vote, as he has done, to pay the living and the widows and orphans of the dead the last farthing which may be justly claimed in their behalf. He will seek no exemption from this charge, and will ask no participation in its benefits. Here and there, perhaps, may be found an individual (although I have never seen or known of one) who indulges, though feebly, the hope that at some time, in some way, he may receive compensation for his losses during the war; but such a person is only a living illustration of the truth that no limit can be set to the bounds of the human imagination, and that to the eye of faith nothing is impossible. It would be a liberal estimate to fix the number of such persons at one in a hundred thousand of the Southern people. No shifting of policy, and no change

of administration, can ever produce a formidable increase in their number—the prophetic utterances of over-sensitive natures to the contrary notwithstanding. To suppose otherwise is to indulge a morbid fancy.

No; the maimed Confederate soldier will cheerfully contribute to the pension fund which gives food and raiment to the maimed Union soldier or his family, and will never ask to participate with them therein. He knows that common sense forbids the consideration of such a proposition, and, therefore, it has never occupied his attention for a moment. The restoration of his rights as an American citizen—and chief among them the right of local self-government which he now enjoys—fills the measure of his expectations, if not of his desires; and his only ambition now is to continue in their enjoyment, and to bring back from its long exile the banished spirit of material progress and enthrone it permanently in his country. His destiny, under God, is in his own hands, and it is safe. Henceforward he will stand by your side in every effort to advance the honor and welfare, to erect again the prostrate industries and restore the commercial power, of the Great Republic. What other aspiration can he have? What possible inducement could be offered to him to act otherwise? He is your fellow-citizen, living in the enjoyment of the same rights and privileges accorded to every inhabitant of this free land, and resting secure beneath the protecting folds of that glorious standard whose crimson stripes were painted with the life-blood of his fathers and yours; and whenever in the future it shall be unfurled in war the Confederate soldier will be found beneath it, ready to give his life in its defence. If such occasion should ever occur I think the boys in blue would hardly object to touch elbows with him, and would rather enjoy the “old rebel yell” he would raise. No one desires to see war who has ever had the experience of it, but if it should come the spectacle of a solid column composed of alternate regiments of ex-Union and ex-Confederate soldiers would be a goodly sight to see. The thought of

such a spectacle is inspiring and quickens the pulse. The realization of it would "provoke the silent dust" of our dead comrades, and would bring upon the winds of heaven the soft music of their common benediction.

And now to their honored shades let our parting thoughts be addressed. Another year has passed. Once more Spring mantles field and forest with her emerald robe, and again the sweet May "wakes her harp of pines." Soon the women of the land will gather in a hundred of the silent cities of the dead to deck with garlands the gateways through which their heroes marched to glory. When these ceremonies are performed and tender memories of the by-gone time have softened their hearts and moistened their eyes, let them remember, too, that our brothers whose graves they decorate are at peace forever. A grateful nation has gathered the bones of the Union dead in various parts of the country and beautified their last resting place. There are but few Confederate cemeteries, and these few are generally unadorned.

Scattered throughout the land, from the heights of Gettysburg to the valleys of Texas, lie the remains of thousands of our countrymen of each army whose bones no loving hands have gathered, whose requiem remains unsung save by the night winds, and above whose silent sepulchres no other flowers bloom than those with which generous nature decks neglected graves.

" By the flow of the inland river,
Whence the fleets of iron have fled,
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver
Asleep on the ranks of the dead :—
Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the judgment day ;
Under the one the Blue
Under the other the Gray."

May we, their surviving countrymen, ennobled by their example, inspired by the memory of their heroism, and chastened by a common affliction, pursue

" The plans of fair delightful peace,
Unwarped by party rage, to live like brothers."

THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIER.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE WRITTEN REQUEST OF

5,000 EX-UNION SOLDIERS,

AT

STEINWAY HALL, NEW YORK CITY,

Friday Evening, May 3d, 1878,

FOR THE

Benefit of the 47th N. Y. Veteran Volunteers,

(MILES O'REILLY'S REGIMENT,)

BY

HON. ALFRED M. WADDELL, M. C.,

OF NORTH CAROLINA.

WASHINGTON:

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